



Restoring Creative Balance: How to Create Mental ‘Space’ and Design a Mandala

May 04, 2020 | Dana Rampolla

Do you need a simple and relaxing creative outlet? Drawing a mandala is a type of ‘organized doodling’ that provides an opportunity for escape and reflection.

Are you interested in participating in a simple, relaxing creative outlet? Consider clearing your headspace and then artistically “doodling” a design called a mandala. Generally speaking, mandalas have deep religious meaning for multiple faiths, but for some people, creating them is simply a reflective practice used in art therapy. Members of UMB’s Artists’ Alliance recently **participated in a guided activity** to create mandalas of their own.

(See the mandalas created by the members.)

Before beginning this activity, gather your tools:

- Two sheets of paper (white or colored)
- One drawing tool (a black pen) is adequate
- Colored pens or pencils are optional

1. Center Yourself – Meditative Thought

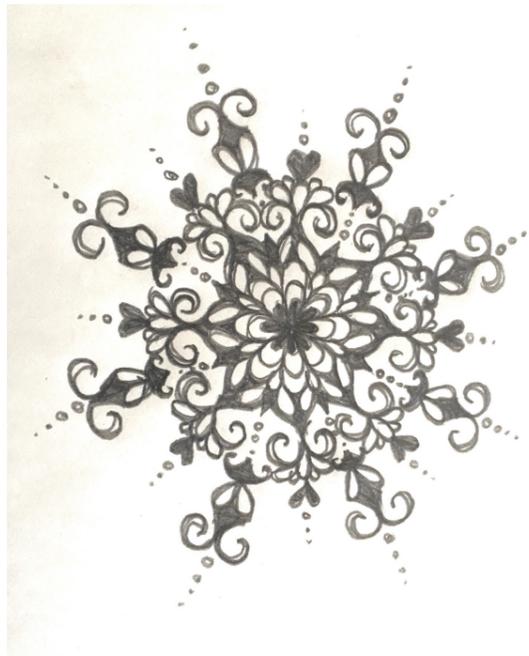
- Place your feet on the floor.
- Become aware of where your body touches the chair.
- Lift your head up to create awareness and dignity.
- Close your eyes or engage in a soft, downward gaze.
- Take at least five mindful deep breaths, focusing on your breath coming and going.
- After that mindful moment, think about the following:
 - What do you notice about your thoughts and mind? Your body? Your breath?
- OUTCOME: How would you like to use this restorative time today? Write down words, phrases, goals, themes, or whatever comes to mind.

2. “Brew Your Creativity” – Create a Word Cloud/Web

- Draw 3 “clouds” using the shape of circles or ovals.
- Select one word for each cloud (the word can be a feeling, thought, goal, challenge, etc.).
- Draw three legs or branches on each cloud. Add one word to each branch that relates to the word in your cloud.
- OUTCOME: Select one “cloud family” of words to keep in mind during the next phase of this exercise. Save the rest for later.

3. Design Your Mandala

- Create your “structure” by drawing a circle, either freehand or by tracing a round object, such as a cup or bowl.
- Set a timer for 20 minutes.
 - Now is the time to “play” inside the circle using shapes, lines, shading, and repetition.
 - If you are doing this with a group using a virtual platform (e.g., Zoom, Webex, Teams Meetings, etc.), it’s OK to stay connected during this time — you might find that you enjoy hearing the small sounds in other people’s homes as everyone connects and focuses.
 - Choosing to use just one drawing tool may help you focus on the dynamic possibilities of, for example, a black pen or a brush dipped in black ink.



YOU MIGHT LIKE

May 04, 2020
[On the Bright Side: Artists’ Alliance Members Share Time ‘Zooming’ into Creativity](#)

May 04, 2020
[Restoring Creative Balance: How to Create Mental ‘Space’ and Design a Mandala](#)

May 01, 2020
[On the Bright Side: Simulation, NNP, and CRNA Faculty Help Students Save Virtual Premature Newborn](#)

May 01, 2020
[Helping Hands: The Kindness Pantry](#)

May 01, 2020
[Helping Hands: The PATIENTS Program Stays Connected to the Community](#)

**Students,
faculty, and staff,
let your voice be
heard!**

[Submit Your Story.](#)

iv) You may decide to add a few more options toward the end of this practice, a few colored markers or a writing pencil for shading.

4. Reflection

- a) What surprised you during this time?
- b) Did you have any “aha” moments?
- c) Which parts were easy? Which were more challenging?

5. Integration

- a) What do you want to remember from this time?
- b) Give two or three words that describe this time.

Resources

Structure guided by the FAN (Facilitating Attuned Interactions) Approach: <https://www.erikson.edu/professional-development/facilitating-attuned-interactions/>

Learn about the Zentangle method and be inspired by structured patterns: <https://zentangle.com>

SHARE THIS PAGE



Arts | Happenings

The Elm

STUDENTS, FACULTY, AND STAFF, LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

If you're interested in seeing your writing on *The Elm*, please submit your story using the link below.

SUBMIT YOUR CONTENT

SUBSCRIBE TO *ELM WEEKLY*

Keep Reading

TOPICS

Elm Stories
Announcements
Voices & Opinions
Accolades
News Hub
Calendar
UMB Social

SCHOOLS

Dentistry
Graduate
Law
Medicine
Nursing
Pharmacy
Social Work

LOOKING FOR OLD *ELM* ARTICLES?

The Elm was overhauled and relaunched in February 2019. Articles from before that time can still be accessed at [The Elm Archive](#).

